



International
Labour
Organization

SKILLUP

Results

Skills Partnerships on Migration in the Western African & Central African regions

Skills partnerships can contribute to reaping migrants' potential more effectively, acting as an innovative mechanism for maximising **brain gain** and sharing the **benefits of migration** for both origin and destination countries.

Ultimately, these partnerships help **skills development systems become more inclusive**, migration more demand-led, and migrant workers better prepared, protected and able to utilize their skills.

The highest incidence of low- and semi-skilled migration on the African continent is found in the Central African, West-African and Sahel regions. As part of the SKILL-UP Programme, developed jointly with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the ILO embarked on a 12-month project designed to promote skills partnerships in a **tripartite** consultative manner and developed implementable and potentially scalable ideas for skills partnerships at country- and corridor-level.



Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

ITC 
International Training Centre

Why Skills Partnerships on Migration?

In 2018, Heads of State adopted the **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** at the United Nations General Assembly. Recognising the need for skills partnerships, this intergovernmental agreement dedicates its Objective 18 to the issue of investing in skills development and facilitating mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences.

In collaboration with UNESCO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Organization of Employers (IOE), the ILO launched the **Global Skills Partnership** to support the development of skills partnerships between countries, along migration corridors and within selected regions. While most international cooperation regarding the free movement of people focuses on highly skilled individuals, the Global Skills Partnerships pays particular attention to **low- and medium-skilled migrants**.

Forging Skills Partnerships on Migration



Governments/Employers share information on labour market demand and integrate this information into their migration policies



Migrant workers are trained in countries of destination and/or training systems in countries of origin are upgraded



Migrants' skills are recognized and put to use in countries of destination and upon return in countries of origin



Mutual recognition and harmonization of training systems promotes mutual learning and strengthening of skills and lifelong learning systems in all countries involved



What has been achieved so far?

Sub-regional analysis of the potential for skills partnerships on migration:

With a team of 16 national and 2 international experts, the ILO conducted **16 country studies** and **two sub-regional scoping studies** identifying the potential for skills partnerships on migration between different countries and skills institutions, including ministries, training providers, employment services, sectoral bodies and employers' and workers' organizations.



These studies provided the basis for the discussions that took place under two separate tripartite workshops organised by the ILO in Western Africa and the Sahel, and in Central Africa.

Tripartite consultations for the formulation of skills partnerships on migration:

The tripartite workshop for **Western Africa and Sahel took place from 11-13 September 2019** in Abuja, Nigeria, and brought together **61 participants from 8 countries**, along with partners from the Global Skills Partnership.

The tripartite workshop for **Central Africa took place from 16-18 September 2019** in Yaoundé, Cameroon, and brought together **46 participants from 6 countries**, along with partners from the Global Skills Partnership.

The methodology for the workshop, co-designed with the ILO International Training Centre (ITCILO) in Turin, stimulated participation and helped to promote ownership.

1. The work in West Africa was cost-shared with the FMM West Africa Project, funded by the European Union.

Through the interactions, participants:

- 1 Familiarized with different dimensions of skills partnerships:**
 - information guidance and counselling of migrant workers;
 - identification, anticipation and sharing of skills demand and supply;
 - skills development in country of origin and/or destination;
 - mutual recognition and / or joint harmonization of qualifications;
 - recognition of prior learning
- 2 Discussed priorities and roles of governments, workers and employers**
- 3 Generated partnership ideas**
- 4 Selected most promising ideas and formed partnerships through simulation and refined ideas**
- 5 Evaluated ideas through crowdsourcing and selected winners**
- 6 Developed action plans for winning ideas**

Implementing partnership ideas

The winning partnership ideas and their action plans provide solutions for countries to strengthen their skills systems and labour migration governance. The ILO stands ready to support these initiatives and their implementation to promote inclusive growth in the sub-regions.

Some of the ideas retained are presented below:



Recognition and validation of prior learning for priority occupations

Mauritania and **Senegal** agreed on a five-year joint action plan to develop common occupational, competency and assessment standards in the priority occupations they will identify. They also committed to support enterprises to upgrade the equipment and training of tutors.



Harmonization of training programmes in agriculture, construction and metal construction

Burkina Faso and **Mali** formed a three-year partnership to harmonize the content of their training programmes in three different sectors. Their action plan also involves sharing experiences and good practices while facilitating the socio-professional integration of migrants.



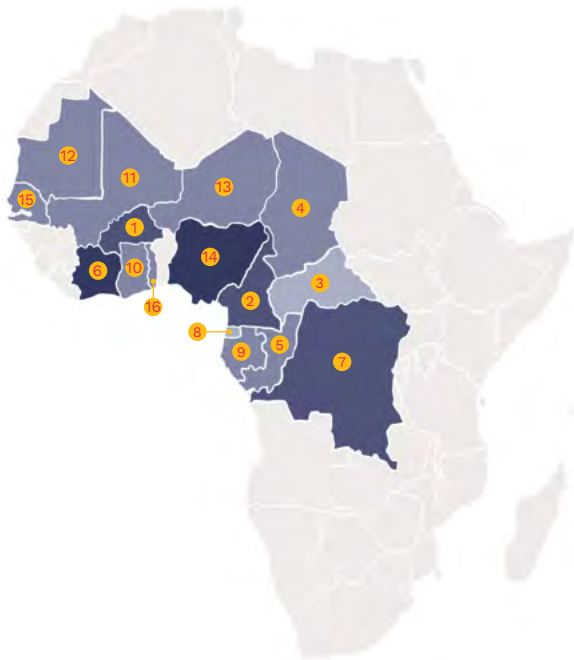
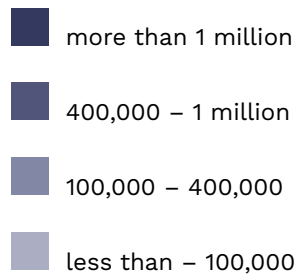
Harmonization of certification and standards

Nigeria, **Ghana** and **Togo** agreed to collaborate on the harmonization of certifications and standards to facilitate the portability of skills between the three countries. This will boost the confidence of employers in hiring migrant workers and facilitate better integration of migrant workers in the workforce.

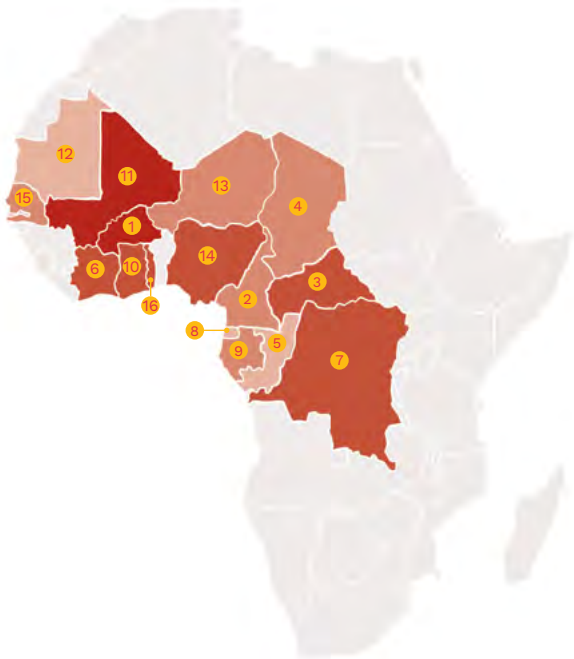
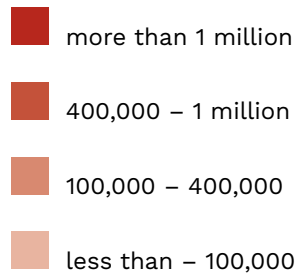
Social dialogue at tripartite workshops

The tripartite delegations consisted of four government representatives as well as two employers' and two workers' representatives from each country. This composition allowed for the formulation of skills partnerships that reflected the needs expressed by all the social partners.

**Stock of
immigrants
from other
African
countries**



**Stock of
emigrants in
other African
countries**



**There are around
6 million migrant
workers currently
residing in the 16
project countries:**

- 1** Burkina Faso
- 2** Cameroon
- 3** Central African Republic
- 4** Chad
- 5** Congo
- 6** Côte d'Ivoire
- 7** Democratic Republic of Congo
- 8** Equatorial Guinea
- 9** Gabon
- 10** Ghana
- 11** Mali
- 12** Mauritania
- 13** Niger
- 14** Nigeria
- 15** Senegal
- 16** Togo

(UNDESA, 2019)

